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Consider the possibility that the hair on your head is there to do more than just look good. From a yogic perspective, hair is an amazing gift of nature that can actually help raise the Kundalini energy (creative life force) which, in turn, serves to increase vitality, intuition and tranquility. Today most people may not notice the subtle, but powerful difference between cutting and keeping their hair. “Our hair fashions might be just a trend”, “but if we investigate,” Yogi Bhajan states, “we may find that we have been depriving ourselves of one of the most valuable sources of energy for human vitality.”^[i]

Long ago in many cultures, people kept their hair because it was a part of who they were. There were no salons. When people were conquered or enslaved, their hair was often cut as a sign of slavery. It was understood that this would serve as a punishment and decrease the power of those enslaved. The bones in the forehead are porous and function to transmit light to the pineal gland in the brain, which affects brain activity, as well as thyroid and sexual hormones. Cutting the hair into bangs which then cover the forehead, impedes this process. Yogi Bhajan explains that when Ghenghis Khan conquered China, he considered the Chinese to be a very wise, intelligent people who would not allow themselves to be subjugated. He therefore required all women in the country to cut their hair and wear bangs, because he knew this would serve to keep them timid and more easily controlled. As whole tribes or societies were conquered, cut hair became so prevalent that the importance of hair was lost after a few generations, and hair styles and fashion grew to be the focus.

Science of Hair

The science of hair was one of the first technologies given by Yogi Bhajan when he came to America: Left uncut, your hair will grow to a particular length and then stop all by itself at the correct length for you. It takes approximately three years from the last time your hair was cut for antennas to form at the tips of the hair. These antennas act as conduits to bring you greater quantities of subtle, cosmic energy.^[ii] “When the hair on your head is allowed to attain its full, mature length, then phosphorous, calcium and vitamin D are all produced, enter the lymphatic fluid, and eventually the spinal fluid, through the two ducts on the top of the brain. This ionic change creates more efficient memory and leads to greater physical energy, improved stamina, and patience.” Yogi Bhajan went on to explain that, “if you choose to cut your hair, you not only lose this extra energy and nourishment, but your body must then provide a great amount of vital energy and nutrients to continually re-grow the missing hair.”

There are two distinctly different parts of the human brain. They are so different that Yogi Bhajan simply says that we have two brains. The back brain lives on the cerebral spinal fluid, which travels up the spine. However, the energy for the front portion of the brain is drawn from the hair. Hairs are the antennas that gather and channel the sun energy or prana to these frontal lobes, the part of the brain you use for meditation and visualization.^[iii] During meditation, these antennas “make it easier to hear the sound current (Naad), through which you can open the solar center on your crown more easily. The experience of awakening your perception to the infinite there is similar to the sound of the gong. As we become more aware of the vastness and oneness of the universe through this ‘tenth gate’ we gain humility and a feeling of wholeness.”^[iv]

“When you meditate, you can have an amazing, elevated experience, but you cannot completely sustain that elevation without the heavy, pure protein of your full hair.” If you choose to keep your hair and cover your

your crown chakra with a white cloth during meditation this will help to retain the benefits of your meditative experience.

Kundalini Hair Care

If we wear our long hair down, the antennas of the hair are allowed to scatter.[v] They rub against each other and by doing so, take away the electric charge from the working brain. [vi] Scattered loose, the hair can also get split ends and their ability to act as antennas is damaged. If you have long hair, see if your experience is different when it is clean and coiled at your crown, or down and loose. Experiment and experience it yourself. If you get split ends, instead of trimming them and losing your antennas, Yogi Bhajan recommends applying almond oil to your hair overnight so that it can be absorbed before you wash it the next morning. Be sure to either cover your head or put a towel on your pillow to protect your bedding. Then keep it coiled on your crown and protected with a head covering during the day to help your antennas heal.

Your hair can also be damaged by combing it when wet as this causes it to stretch and break. One year, after Winter Solstice, when Yogi Bhajan was sitting in our living room with wet hair, he explained that he was drying it before putting it up in order to avoid a headache. This is because if you put your hair up wet, it will tend to shrink and tighten a bit as it dries. A better idea is to take the time occasionally to sit in the sun and allow your clean, wet hair to dry naturally and absorb some extra vitamin D. [vii]

When practicing Kundalini yoga, it is beneficial to have clean hair, and a head covering which will protect the openness of the crown chakra, (especially when teaching). Yogis recommend shampooing the hair every 72 hours (or more frequently if the scalp sweats a great deal.) It can also be beneficial to wash your hair after being upset to help process emotions.

Yogis recommend using a wooden comb or brush for combing your hair as it gives a lot of circulation and stimulation to the scalp. Most significantly, the wood does not create static electricity which causes a loss of the hair's energy to the brain. If you comb your hair and scalp front to back, back to front and then up to the right and left several times, it will refresh you, no matter how long your hair is. All the tiredness of your day will be gone. It is something you can try for yourself. [viii] Yogi Bhajan said that if you know this technique to comb your hair, you may not need aspirin, and you can overcome weakness and energize yourself within a short time. For women, using this technique to comb your hair twice a day can help maintain their youth, the health of their menstrual cycle and their eyesight.

During the day, the hair absorbs solar energy, but at night it absorbs lunar energy. Keeping the hair up during the day and down at night aids in this process. Braiding your hair down at night will help your electromagnetic field balance out from the day. In India, a Rishi is known as a wise one who coils his or her hair up on the crown during the day to energize the brain cells and then combs it down at night

The pineal gland in the center of your brain is stimulated when your magnetic field (aura) is energized by combing and coiling your hair into a rishi knot on your crown. "This activation of your pineal results in a secretion that is central to the development of higher intellectual functioning, as well as higher spiritual perception." [ix] If you seal this energizing coil with a head covering or turban, you then create your own simple, yet powerful, energy receiver.

One ancient method of raising the Kundalini life force is to allow the hair to grow to its full length and be coiled on the crown of the head, so that the sun energy is pulled quickly through it, charging your strength. This pranic life energy (not to be confused with actual sunlight) is drawn down the spine, and to counteract that downward movement, the Kundalini life energy rises to create balance.

If you are bald or balding, the lack of hair energy can be counteracted with more meditation. If you are finding some silver strands in your hair, be aware that the silver or white color increases the vitamins and energy flow to compensate for aging. For better brain health as you age, try to keep your hair as natural and healthy as you can.

Yogi Bhajan taught that in order to sustain oneself in the face of all environmental pressure, you need very strong nerves. If your nervous system holds steady you won't fall apart. All your behavior: your patience, projection, constant going and working, depends on your nerves. What builds and maintains your nerves? The electrical charge of the body nourishes your nervous system which is controlled by the brain, but it is your hair that gives you that electrical energy. In Yogi Bhajan's words, "your hair is not there by mistake. It has a definite purpose, which saints will discover and other men will laugh at." [x]

Whatever hair you have now, try an experiment, and see if you can tie it up on the top of your head, coiling it if it has any length. Then cover and secure it tightly with a cotton handkerchief or a silk scarf and see if you can slightly pull up the scalp holding the 26 bones of the skull gently in place. This will give you extra energy for athletic competition, yoga and meditation. Yogi Bhajan felt this was an important component in his invincibility on the football field as a youth. If you do not contain the movement of your cranial bones, and their adjustment shifts suddenly, you can become more emotional and conflicted.

As Yogiji (as we called him in his early years in the U.S.), taught us the science of the yogic lifestyle, he said, "Don't believe me. Test it out. Try it for yourself." So, when I was 17 and experimenting with the science of coiling my long hair on my crown, I tried some days with white cotton fabric covering my head and some days without. I found that working very long hours in the Golden Temple Restaurant with and without a head covering was very different. At the end of the 16 hour work day when I had covered my head, I was much more relaxed, energetic and centered.

I have always been curious about how the human body works from a yogic perspective, and why Yogi Bhajan spoke so adamantly to people about covering their heads when they went out into the sunlight. And this was after he had just told us the benefits of allowing your wet hair to dry in the sun! I found that many ancient sages used to keep their dry hair covered because they knew the direct sun energy was too strong. Human energy has a lower voltage than the sun, and because hairs are not good conductors of heat or electricity, they protect the brain from the more powerful sun energy. This protective layer of hair and natural fiber helps to facilitate calmness and non-reactivity so that we are more peaceful within. Even if you do not choose to keep your hair, you can still cover your crown during meditation which will help to retain the benefits of your meditation experience.

Women with longer hair may want to experiment to see if they feel a difference in their personal power and projection when they wear their hair loose, or tie it up or back.

The molecular structure of your hair contains three things: Your genetic material, your minerals and it is actually the only part of you that contains an imprint of your life journey,

your psychological destination. Indian doctors can read your life from your hair as you can read the history of a tree from its rings when cut. Just as the rings of the tree give a glimpse into the history of the tree. [xi] In India, ayurvedic doctors use a special system of stretching the wet hairs which they take from your comb, From this system they can write down your whole history and give you the most accurate diagnosis. Today in the west, the science of hair analysis is used to diagnose the state of a person's nutritional health.

“All the traditions we have created in our history, we created simply because we wanted to be happy. Currently, there is a loneliness and an emptiness in our spiritual realm such that the call of our soul is becoming louder and louder.” [xii] In this time of great change on our planet, we have many emotions, desires and insecurities which can throw us off balance. But if we are always off balance, who wants to be around us after a while? There is no happiness, continuity, achievement, or creativity if we are off balance.

I was speaking with a young store clerk last week who does not do yoga, but has only cut his hair three times in his life: once when he was 5, once at 13, and just now at age 21. I asked him about how it felt to go from having long hair for many years to very short hair all of a sudden. And after he thought a moment, he said he definitely felt less energized, and more like he blended in with what was ‘normal’, but overall felt kind of ‘dull’ compared to life with hair. So no matter what you do with your hair, pay attention to how it affects you, because hair does have a science behind it.

Yogi Bhajan told us this story about hair many years ago at women's camp in New Mexico: “Recognize how beautiful and powerful your hair is that when you keep it, you live a life of fulfillment in this world. When Rabindranath Tagore, the great poet who found God within himself, tried to meet a friend on a steamer ship, the friend didn't recognize him and so wrote him a letter.

“We were on the same steamer, but I didn't find you.”

Tagore said, “I was there.”

His friend said, “I understand you are now a God-realized man, and I would like to know what was your first action when you became aware of the Oneness in all?”

Tagore said, “When I realized the Oneness of all, I threw my shaving kit into the ocean. I gave up my ego and surrendered to nature. I wanted to live in the form that my Creator has given me.” [xiii]

If you break the antenna of a television, then you will not receive anything on that television. The Creator has a definite reason for giving you hair. Man is the only creature who grows longer hair on his head as he grows into adulthood. When a human allows his or her hair to grow, they are welcoming the maturity, the responsibility of being fully grown, and fully powerful. The time we naturally have short hair is in our youngest years of life. The truth is that whenever you add something to the body or remove something from the body, it demonstrates attachment to the body, and interferes with the miraculous balance and science of how the human mind and body work.

The longer and fuller a person's hair, the more personal power they tend to exhibit. That is why you will always find grace and calmness in a person with uncut hair from birth, if they keep it well.” [xiv]

This body of yours is more beautifully designed than we usually even notice. Through experience comes understanding. Your hair is yours. Experience it and understand it.